

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5365

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 6284

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR MASS KS US

SUBJ: KOREAN RESPONSE TO SCM

REF: SEOUL 6283

SUMMARY: INITIAL KOREAN POST-SCM REACTION IS BASICALLY UPBEAT. APPEARS MANY KOREANS ARE SATISFIED WITH GUIDLINES ESTABLISHED FOR ROK DEFENSE, AND WILL FOCUS FUTURE CONCERNS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF SCM FRAMEWORK. END SUMMARY.

1. ALL JULY 27 MORNING AND AFTERNOON DAILIES HAVE GIVEN SCM RESULTS TOP HEADLINE PLAY AND THOROUGH COVERAGE. HEADLINES EMPHASIZE POINTS IN COMMUNIQUE ON WITHDRAWAL SCHEDULE, ESTABLISHMENT OF COMBINED COMMAND, AND TO LESSER EXTENT SECRETARY BROWN'S PRESS CONFERENCE PROMISE TO CONTINUE NUCLEAR UMBRELLA. ALL PAPERS PRINTED FULL TEXT OF COMMUNIQUE AND RAN AT LEAST THREE OR FOUR ADDITIONAL STORIES AND COMMENTARIES ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF MEETINGS.

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2. SEOUL PRESS HAS EXPRESSED BASIC BUT STILL SOMEWHAT GUARDED SATISFACTION AT EVIDENCE PROVIDED BY 10TH SECURITY CONSULTATIVE MEETING (SCM) JULY 25 AND 26 THAT U.S. INTENDS CONTINUED SUFFICIENT DEFENSE COMMITMENT IN KOREA. VERNACULAR INDEPENDENT HANKUK ILBO AND ASSOCIATED ENGLISH-LANGUAGE KOREAN TIMES EDITORIALS JULY 27 PROCLAIMED MEETING "SATISFACTORY," LISTING

MANY INDICATIONS IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE, AND ESPECIALLY PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT PAK, THAT U.S. COMMITMENT TO KOREAN DEFENSE REMAINS UNDIMINISHED. CONSERVATIVE CHOSON ILBO JULY 27 EDITORIAL MADE BASICALLY SAME POINT, BUT ALSO WONDERED WHETHER SCM WILL CONVINCE NORTH KOREANS, AND EXPRESSED WISH JOINT COMMUNIQUE HAD PLEDGED U.S. PROMPT AND EFFECTIVE "INTERVENTION" INSTEAD OF MERE "SUPPORT" IN DEFENSE AGAINST ARMED ATTACK. BOTH HANKUK ILBO AND CHOSON ILBO CONCLUDED NEXT ISSUE KOREANS WILL FOCUS ON IS QUESTION WHETHER USG WILL BE ABLE TO IMPLEMENT PROMISES MADE, ESPECIALLY FOR COMPENSATORY MEASURES, AT SCM.

2. KOREAN POLITICIANS' PUBLIC STATEMENTS DIVIDED ALONG PREDICTABLE DOMESTIC POLITICAL LINES. DRP SPOKESMAN PAK CHUL AND YUCHONGHOE SPOKESMAN YI CHONG-SIK ISSUED SEPARATE BUT SIMILAR STATEMENTS JULY 26 EXPRESSING SATISFACTION WITH MEETINGS AND ESPECIALLY WITH CARTER LETTER, AND CALLING FOR ROK EFFORTS TO BUILD SELF-RELIANT DEFENSE CAPABILITY. NDP LEADER YI CHOL-SUNG, WHO HAS ALL ALONG BEEN AMONG MOST VOCIFESOUS OPPONENTS OF TROOP WITHDRAWAL, ANNOUNCED DISSATISFACTION WITH TALKS, CLAIMING USG HAS NOT ADEQUATELY JUSTIFIED WITHDRAWAL, INSISTING UPON COMPENSATION BEFORE WITHDRAWAL, PROTESTING U.S. PROMISES OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE ARE VAGUE AND DENYING CARTER LETTER IS CONVINCING PROOF OF U.S. COMMITMENT.

4. EMBOFF DISCUSSED CONFERENCE RESULTS WITH ROKG DELEGATES MAJ
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GEN SON CHANG-NAE AND LT GEN YU PYONGYBHYON JULY ZQYTW SON SAID HE WAS PLEASED WITH EXPRESSION OF CONTINUED U.S. COMMITMENT IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE, BUT WAS DISAPPOINTED AIR FORCE AUGMENTATION WILL AMOUNT TO NO MORE THAN 12 PLANES, AND THAT USG COULD NOT GUARANTEE TRANSFER TO ROK OF ALL EIGHT ARMY EQUIPMENT IDENTIFIED IN MILITARY WORKING GROUP. YU SAID HE IS SATISFIED WITH THE MEETINGS, BUT WILL WAIT TO SEE HOW PLANS LAID NOW WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN FUTURE.

5. IN SUM, SCM HAS NOT, AS EXPECTED, ALLAYED ALL ANXIETIES OF KOREANS, WHO REALIZE CRUCIAL FACTORS OF THEIR SECURITY ENVIRONMENT ARE FUNDAMENTALLY BEYOND THEIR CONTROL AND ARE CONSEQUENTLY COUQUEITALLY NERVOUS. PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS ARE, HOWEVER, THAT SCM RESULTS WERE STRONG ENOUGH TO SATISFY MANY, AND THAT FUTURE KOREAN WORRIES LIKELY TO FOCUS IN MORE CONSTRUCTIVE VIEN ON IMPLEMENTATION OF FRAMEWORK ESTABLISHED IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE.
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